that over 75% of total T&D losses almost entire commercial loss take place at distribution stage, apart from maximum customer interface. Distribution reform will bring about financial viability of the power sector to enable it to sustain private investment in the sector.

Implementation of short-term schemes *viz.* consumer meters, capacitor installation, replacement/ installation of distribution transforms and reconductoring sanctioned during 2000-01, have helped in improvement of revenue and reduction of outages in certain States. The schemes are under implementation.

**Declaration of backward districts in Himachal Pradesh**

†724. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the districts in Himachal Pradesh that have been declared backward by Government;

(b) what are the norms for assessing any district to be declared as backward;

(c) when was such an assessment made in Himachal Pradesh in the past; and

(d) by when the decision in respect of reassessing the backwardness of the districts of the State is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M. K. PATIL): (a) to (c) A committee (headed by the then Principal Adviser in the Planning Commission) was constituted in 1997 to, *inter-alia,* identify the 100 must backward and poorest districts in the country. The broad parameters adopted by the Committee to analyze the causes of backwardness, included indicators of deprivation (poverty ratio) and social and economic infrastructure. Keeping the above parameters in view, the Committee identified 100 most backward and poorest districts in the country including Hamirpur District of Himachal Pradesh.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Revision of action plan for watershed schemes**

725. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to revise the action plan for the ongoing watershed schemes according to the demand of the area

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.